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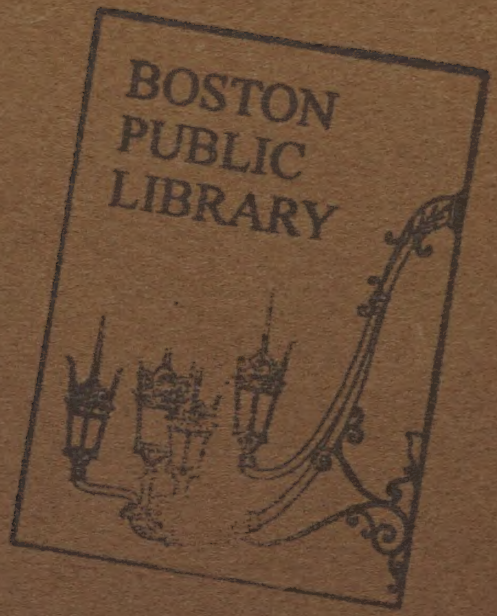

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GOVERNMENT CENTER — BOSTON

PREPARED FOR THE CITY PLANNING BOARD OF BOSTON, MASS.

Adams, Howard & Greeley, Consultants, in association with:
Anderson, Beckwith & Haible; Sasaki, Walker & Associates;
Kevin Lynch; John R. Myer; and Paul D. Spreiregen.

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Five perspective views of the scheme and three small diagrams of basic features complete the list of illustrations. These eight drawings are unnumbered.

the city hall seen from the federal square

Foreword

This study was authorized by the City Planning Board on November 17, 1958, with the objective of preparing a plan which will serve as an effective guide to public and private development within the area concerned.

The problem of meeting the complex and sometimes conflicting requirements of the various elements in the plan was a most difficult one. Due to the close interrelationship between the size and location of the proposed public and private buildings, the vehicular and pedestrian traffic patterns, and the surrounding streets and buildings that would remain in substantially their present form, a shift of one major element usually required a reappraisal of the entire scheme.

During the course of the study the consultants and their associates have met with a number of public and private agencies concerned with the planning and development of the Government Center, including, in addition to your Board, the Boston Redevelopment Authority, the Boston Traffic Commission, the Department of Public Works, and the Public Improvement Commission, the Metropolitan Transit Authority, the State Office Building Association, the State Department of Administration and Finance, Department of Public Works, and Housing Board, the General Services Administration, of the United States Government; the National Historical Sites Commission, the Architectural Advisory Committee, and the Committee on Civic Progress.

The advice and assistance of members of the above agencies and their technical staffs have been of great value in the development of the proposals for the basic land use plan, the circulation pattern, and the system of facilities and services that are necessary for the proper functioning of the area. We are particularly grateful for the effective collaboration of

the real estate consultant, Mr. William S. Ballard, and the engineering consultant, DeLeuw, Cather & Co. — a relationship which proved to be both pleasant and productive. The reports to your Board of the real estate and engineering consultants are being presented separately. However, as planning consultants to your Board, we, together with those associated with us on the planning team, accept full responsibility for the final development plan for the Government Center presented herewith.

In the interim report submitted to the Planning Board in June we recommended that the federal office building be located on the western half of the block bounded by Cambridge, Hanover, Congress, and Sudbury Streets. Subsequent agreement between the general Services Administration and the Boston Redevelopment Authority that an alternative site be found closer to buildings already housing federal activities resulted in consideration being given to part or all of the area bounded by School, Washington, and Court Streets, and Court Square, as a suitable location. The Government Center plan presented with this report is basically similar to the original proposal, with the exception of the location of the federal building.

In addition to the preparation of this report and the accompanying drawings, we have prepared several technical drawings for the Redevelopment Authority together with a memorandum on controls and regulations for application to properties to be sold or leased to private developers.

We, and those associated with us, consider it a privilege to have participated with the many individuals and agencies who have collaborated over the past months in bringing nearer to realization a project which provides the City of Boston with such a unique opportunity in the field of urban redevelopment. It is hoped that the ideas and recommendations contained in this report will, through their consideration and discussion, be of assistance to the City in the final planning and effectuation of this important project.

Frederick J. Adams

for

Adams, Howard & Greeley and Associated Consultants

Boston, Massachusetts September, 1959

SUMMARY OF MAJOR PROPOSALS

Basic Planning Objectives

This report describes a recommended general development plan for the Government Center area, which plan is illustrated graphically in the accompanying drawings. The primary purpose of this plan is to provide suitable sites for a new city hall, a new federal office building, and, eventually, a new county courthouse, served by a vehicular and pedestrian circulation system which will meet the requirements for both through and local traffic.

In addition to providing sites of adequate size and shape for the required governmental structures, properly related to one another and in a setting commensurate with their importance, the plan includes proposals for new private development to replace existing obsolete and uneconomic structures; for the preservation and renovation of the existing historic monuments and sites in the area; and for the establishment of a new civic square which would give Boston a worthy focus of community pride and activity. To accomplish these objectives it is necessary to reorganize completely the present street and block plan. (page 10.)

The Circulation System

1. The basic pattern of the proposed circulation system consists of three major channels which sweep in great parallel arcs from northwest to southwest—the present Central Artery (The John F. Fitzgerald Expressway), a new extension of Congress and Devonshire Streets, and a clarification of the present Tremont-Cambridge Street connection. These major circumferentials are connected to one another by radial streets, of which the most important is a new four-lane road connecting Cambridge Street with the Central Artery and the Sumner Tunnel and crossing the new Congress Street extension on a viaduct. Other radials include the existing Hanover, Court, State, and School Streets. (page 13.)
2. The proposed plan provides for a total of 2,550 automobile parking spaces, of which 2,250 would be off-street in parking structures or in open lots. This represents a 30 per cent increase in present parking facilities, which is considered to be a reasonable expansion in view of the traffic capacity of incoming roads and the ability of drivers to pay for the use of parking garages. (page 14.)
3. Transit improvements contemplated in the proposed plan relate mostly to the remodeling of subway stations, such as those at Scollay, Bowdoin, Adams, Union-Friend, and Haymarket. With the exception of the Scollay Square station, such remodeling would be limited to the aboveground structures. Provision has been made for a right-of-way for the eventual construction of the subway extension from the end of Hanover Street to Park Street, which has been in the design stage for some years. Also, a new bus station at Hanover and Congress Streets is proposed as a replacement for the present MTA and Eastern Massachusetts bus terminal at Haymarket Square. (page 16.)
4. Considerable attention has been given to pedestrian circulation. A major new pedestrian axis has been provided, dropping downhill from Pemberton Square, through the new city square, through Adams Square, and into the space in front of Faneuil Hall. Also, the upper end of Washington Street has been kept open to allow for pedestrian access from Boston's principal shopping street into the Government Center; and a sheltered arcade has been provided for the pedestrian flow along Congress and Portland Streets to the North Station. (page 16.)

Land Use Proposals

1. The general development plan provides for a concentration of governmental uses at the foot of Beacon Hill, in the area lying roughly between School, Congress, and Sudbury Streets and Pemberton Square. This would be the locus of the major public buildings, interwoven with private offices, shops and restaurants. They would focus about a new civic square, approximately 250 feet by 500 feet, with the city hall having the architecturally dominant position. The private uses would draw on the trade of the Government Center, replace the taxable values eliminated by its construction, and give the area the life and movement it would otherwise lack. (page 17.)
2. The new city hall—a six-story building with a gross floor area of 590,000 square feet—is given a key location on the downhill side of a new civic square, where it would be close to the City Hall Annex, to the law and business offices of the central district, and to the county courts. (page 17.)

3. The new federal office building has been located on the block between City Hall Avenue and School, Washington, and Court Streets. It will be twelve to fifteen stories high, and will front on a small open space now occupied by the existing city hall. (page 17.)

4. The principal private building fronting on the main civic square would be a curving structure on the slopes going up to Pemberton Square. On the north side of the square a superblock capable of unified private development has been created between Hanover and new Sudbury Streets. Other structures which would face the square are a building housing the Massachusetts Division of Employment Security, a new private building at the corner of Tremont and Court Streets, and another private building covering the west flank of the Veterans Administration building. (page 18.)

5. The area between Hanover Street, the extension of Congress Street, the rear of the properties on State Street, and the Central Artery, has been designated as a "conservation area," most of which lies outside of the area to be taken by the Redevelopment Authority. Proposals include the clearance of land west of Union Street for new development; the creation of several small new squares and of an arcade along Congress Street; the taking of a few key historic structures for preservation; and the establishment of an historic district. Present market and restaurant activities would be protected and enhanced. (page 19.)

6. The area north of the line: Sudbury-Congress-Hanover Streets, and swinging northwest to the boundary of the project at Chardon Street, is expected to provide locations for new private development, primarily for wholesaling, light manufacturing, business and consumer services and parking. Sites suitable for tall office buildings are also provided at Cambridge and Sudbury Streets, and north of Hanover Street alongside the Central Artery. The "keystone" area between Chardon and Staniford Streets should be studied for possible redevelopment under federal Title 1 assistance. (page 23.)

7. Throughout the area, in addition to the principal square, would run a linked system of small open spaces and footways leading downhill from the crest of Beacon Hill toward the harbor, and connecting laterally with the surrounding open spaces, walkways and historic points. (page 25.)

Effectuation of the Plan

1. The carrying out of the general development plan, if it is to be fully successful, will require the utmost collaboration of federal, state, and city agencies. The major responsibility would rest with the Boston Redevelopment Authority, which would have charge of the acquisition of the land within the project area, demolition of structures to be replaced by new buildings, and the sale or lease of land to private and public owners. The Authority would also be responsible for determining the standards and controls which would be applied to new construction. (page 33.)

2. The development of the historic area could best be accomplished by the taking over by an official historic agency of part of the Union-Hanover-Blackstone-North block, with control over the rest of the conservation area being placed in the hands of an Historic Districts Commission in order to preserve the unique historic and architectural character of this section of the city. (page 19.)

3. Development costs have been estimated on a preliminary basis at $20,865,000 for land acquisition, $3,100,000 for highway and street improvements, and $500,000 for public utilities. Certain other costs have yet to be calculated. Private property removed from the tax rolls has a present valuation of $15,580,000. It is estimated that new taxable development will at least replace this valuation. The resale value of the new sites developed by the plan is presently under study. (page 31.)

4. Relocation both of residents and business firms will be a serious problem in the development. Careful study of the needs of these displaced activities is recommended, as well as a positive plan for their new location and for possible cooperative action. (page 28.)

I — THE BACKGROUND FOR DECISION

For over a hundred years, the business center of Boston has been creeping southwestward, toward the Back Bay. This slow, persistent motion has left behind a wake of half-used buildings and marginal uses, a tangle of narrow streets and odd-shaped plots of land. Dock Square, Scollay Square, and the head of State Street were once the very heart of the city: now only State Street remains in intensive use.

Immediately to the north of State Street, the intensity of use, the valuations, and the conditions of buildings all drop off rapidly. Scollay Square, which years before had shifted from central business use to become a rather well-known entertainment center, has by now lost even this activity, and is lapsing into sheer vacancy.

Yet the area retains its central position in Boston, as well as its advantageous equipment of subway lines. The construction of the new Central Artery has now added good access by car to these earlier advantages. Scattered through the area are activities which are still vital to the economy of Boston. And, since this was the original center of Boston, here is to be found its greatest concentration of historic sites, streets and buildings.

It is this area, from State and School Streets on the south—toward North Station on the north, between Beacon Hill and the West End on the west, and the new Central Artery on the east, for which a future development plan has been prepared. Its position in central Boston is indicated in Fig. 1, (page 7.) while the existing pattern of streets and buildings is shown in Fig. 2. (page 11.)

Purpose of the Plan

The original and principal motivation of this plan is to establish a Government Center, providing sites for a new city hall, a new federal office building and, eventually, a new county courthouse. Adjacent to these is to be built a new state office building. The first necessity is to see that these new buildings have adequate sites to carry on their functions: sites of sufficient size, placed within easy reach of the transit system or the automobile, and given settings commensurate with their symbolic and functional importance.

The new city hall, estimated to be a building of some 590,000 square feet of gross floor area, must be the principal building of the Center, since it contains the local seat of government. Functionally, it needs to be in close touch with all the other governmental offices, but particularly with the county courthouse. It is desirable that it be not far removed from the present City Hall Annex, which may be retained in city use, nor widely separated from the law and business offices of State Street and Post Office Square. Above all, it must be open to the easy reach, and the daily view, of the citizens of Boston.

The federal office structure will be a considerably larger building, enclosing some 1,000,000 square feet of gross floor area. While not requiring the visual prominence of the city hall, it must also be easy to find and easy to reach, since so many individuals will have business in its various offices. Adequate size and shape of site and high accessibility are its prime requirements, but it will gain from proximity to other governmental agencies, both federal and local.

The site of the new state office building of 600,000 gross square feet is fixed by the legislation creating the agency which will erect the structure. This site lies between Bowdoin and Somerset Streets, Ashburton Place and Cambridge Street, on the north flank of Beacon Hill. Here it will be close to the Government Center and to the State House itself, as well as accessible to Cambridge Street and the Bowdoin Square subway station. It is essential that the design of this building be coordinated with that of the Center as a whole.

The present county courthouse on Pemberton Square will of necessity remain in service for some time to come. But it seems inevitable that the older unit, which is today already obsolete and difficult to maintain, will in its turn be replaced within the next ten or fifteen years. Therefore the plan, while allowing the continued use of the present building as long as necessary, must provide for a future replacement on a site close by the present 25-story annex to the County Courthouse, a newer building which has many years of useful life ahead of it.

In addition to these principal governmental buildings there are other public functions which will need house room. These include the State Division of Employment Security, requiring 300,000 square feet of gross floor area and a location convenient to the subway system; and a new

Figure 1

THE SETTING OF THE GOVERNMENT CENTER

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consolidated fire station, so located as to be able to send engines without delay to points in the central business district, Beacon Hill, the West End, the Government Center area, the North End, Charlestown and East Boston. Other functions, such as a consolidated police station, may also locate here. Certainly it can be anticipated from past history that governmental services will expand, and that the plan must provide at least a possible axis of growth for each major unit.

Economic Problems

Although provision for these agencies is the original motive of the plan, yet many other problems are inherent in the area and many other effects will flow from any concerted action in it. Since intensive commercial and office uses are slowly shifting away from this area, there has been a progressive discard of structures and utilities. Taxable valuations have been falling over the long term, and in the future—without remedial action—the area will become a region of parking lots and crumbling, empty buildings. A plan for the area must again put it to productive use and should, to the maximum extent possible, provide sites for new business enterprises.

It would be unrealistic to think that action at this one point could reverse the historic movement of the Boston core, or make Scollay Square once again the prime commercial location. Yet there are equally important things that a new plan could do for the economy of the city. First, by renewal of this decaying section, it could anchor the older end of the central business district, stabilizing the present substantial business activities that are located there and preventinng their isolation or unnecessary flight. Second, by taking advantage of the amenities of a new environment and of the large numbers of new governmental employees that will come into the area, it could bring back a substantial amount of new private activity. These new enterprises, although occupying a smaller percentage of the ground, could at least be equal in assessed valuation to the existing declining activities, and might even surpass them. If the plan is capable of achieving this, it must be looked upon as pure gain for the city, since otherwise demolition for the needed governmental sites and new highways would have simply reduced the total of taxable valuations.

Existing Uses in the Area

Beyond the general economic problem as it affects the city as a whole, there are many special problems which face the businesses and activities now located here. The meat and produce markets, in particular, have long roots in the area and complex interrelations with a number of adjacent activities. Originally located here for the proximity to the Port of Boston, there are now fewer reasons for purely wholesaling functions to be located so close to the center. A new wholesale district has been established in the South Bay, and most of the largest firms have already moved there. The very persistence of the old market area, however, indicates that other forces are at work. Most probably, while the purely wholesaling activities will continue to shift away from the center, a substantial number of firms will wish to remain. These are the firms which do a mixed retail and wholesale business, and are thus dependent on the large numbers of people visiting or working in the center; or they are the firms which cater particularly to central shops, restaurants, clubs and hotels. Allied with these firms are the small retail outlets, including the push-carts, which cater to bargain hunters, living both nearby and within a wide circle of the metropolitan area. Not only are these food marketing activities an important part of the city economy and logically located for their function, but they add a great deal to the color and life of a unique city area and help to support a series of fine restaurants and other services.

An existing activity of major importance is that of hard goods wholesaling, particularly of furniture, institutional equipment, toys and novelties. With this is associated light manufacturing, some retailing of furniture and furnishings, and business services such as repair work and printing. There are also specialty retail outlets dealing in books, toys, sporting goods and hardware of various kinds. These uses are scattered from North Station to Cornhill.

In the long term, national trends indicate that those activities which handle large quantities of bulky goods, such as many of the manufacturers or wholesalers with stocks, will tend to leave the congested areas close to the metropolitan center. This shift is to the advantage of both the city and the particular activity and should be encouraged. An area such as South Bay or South Boston is more suitable to their purpose.

Other firms, however, are more closely bound to the central area, either because they must give rapid service to the businesses located there, or because they depend on the customers who congregate in the center. These downtown-oriented activities include wholesale jobbers and factors without extensive stocks on the premises, specialty retail outlets,

vocational schools, and business and repair services. The North Station area will continue to be a good location for these uses, even in the long term.

Some of these businesses could afford to rent or buy new structures whose efficient facilities would offset their increased cost. For these the plan should provide a number of new sites. Other activities, equally legitimate and important, depend on the use of cheap space. These uses will be displaced by any clearance, and the plan must do what it can to ease the transition and to retain older structures in peripheral areas for their use.

Finally, there are the numerous local services in the area: bars, barber shops, restaurants, and small retail outlets. Inevitably, except for the handful which now serve Boston as a whole, many of these will disappear as the character of the area changes and their clientele is replaced by a new group. In their place will appear a whole new range of services. Some of the previous activities will be able to make this transition, and some will be able to relocate elsewhere. Clearance should be managed so as to soften the shock of transition as much as possible.

It is estimated that there are only 150 persons permanently residing in the study area, from Chardon Street to School Street. Therefore the residential relocation problem should not be serious.

The principal historical building remaining in the area is Faneuil Hall itself, a famous national landmark. Behind Faneuil Hall is the Quincy Market, erected by Josiah Quincy in 1825, a handsome example of the Federal style, which is set off by the North and South Market Rows on either side and by the bustling market activity. In the North Row is the nationally-known Durgin Park restaurant. A little farther north are two pre-revolutionary buildings: the Union Oyster House on Union Street, also housing a fine Boston restaurant, and the Hancock House on Marshall Street, once the treasury for the continental army. These latter buildings stand in the Union-Hanover-Blackstone-North block, the only block left in the entire city which preserves the street pattern of the seventeenth century. This block also contains such famous activities as Cheney's drug store, and the push-carts and meat markets of Blackstone and North Streets. It is a block which the National Historic Sites Commission will probably recommend for protective action by the federal government.

The plan must do what it can to preserve these unique locations from destruction, and to restore them from their present dilapidation. The entire region between Union Street, Dock Square and the Artery has a life and color, a symbolic meaning, that would be irreplaceable if lost. Ties should also be established to the historic sites that surround the district: the West Church and Otis House on Cambridge Street; the Revere House and the Old North Church in the North End; the Old State House at the head of State Street; the Old South Church on Washington Street; King's chapel on Tremont Street; and the State House on the peak of Beacon Hill.

Just north of the county annex, and within the study area, lies the old Howard Athenaeum, a theater now closed and remembered chiefly as the home of burlesque. Built in the mid-nineteenth century, it is one of the oldest theaters now standing in America, and has a long and honorable history of operatic and dramatic presentations. Unfortunately, the building is not fireproof, and has little architectural merit. It is isolated, awkwardly sited, and would be expensive to restore to theatrical use. Despite its history, it seems unlikely that the structure can or should be preserved. Also within the study area is the Old Corner Book Store, at the corner of School and Washington Streets. Although this structure has been much abused, it is perhaps the oldest building in the city, and if restored would be a handsome example of an eighteenth century merchant's town house.

Boston itself has a scale and a quality that transcends the sum of its individual historic buildings or sentimental locations. This scale of structure and open space, this intimate mixture of historic symbol and busy commerce, must be maintained and acknowledged in the new plan. Due to the great size and functional demands of the new buildings, this is no easy task.

The Problem of Downtown Traffic

Equally difficult is the relation of the Government Center to traffic. At present the area is a tangle of unplanned narrow streets, filled with traffic forcing its way past vehicles at the curbs. Some of the most accident-prone locations in the city are to be found here. Yet this is necessarily a major zone of entrance into the central business district, due to the presence of Beacon Hill on one side, which deflects traffic from the west around into Scollay Square, and the Central Artery and the Sumner Tunnel on the other side, which pour cars in at Haymarket Square and North Streets. The intensity of traffic will rise still more as the Central

Artery and its associated radials are completed, until it reaches capacity flow and is carrying cars inbound from north, west and south. The completion of the proposed second tube of the Sumner Tunnel will aggravate the problem still further, since it is estimated that 60,000 cars per day will then enter and leave via this facility. All of these flows must necessarily traverse the Government Center area, in order to enter the central zone. More traffic will be generated by the intensive activities of the center itself.

It is not realistic to provide facilities for all who might wish to enter the central business district by private car: this is a policy which is being pursued only with disastrous results by other American cities. It will be imperative to continue to rely on mass transit for much of the central flow. Nevertheless, the plan for this entrance region should provide traffic capacity sufficient to handle the flows that can be delivered by the present incoming roads and absorbed by the present central streets, as well as to allow reasonable choice in the use of private cars in offpeak hours. Even this task is difficult to achieve, while preserving an adequate setting for the new buildings.

The area at present serves as a rather disorganized parking lot for employees of the central district. These spaces will tend to disappear, while at the same time more employees will be brought in, increasing the demand for automobile parking. To the best of its ability, the Government Center area must provide parking for its visitors and employees who are able to come by car, and should allow some surplus for the use of the adjacent office area. Surface parking lots will have to be displaced northwards to more peripheral locations, and multi-story facilities will be required in the area itself.

The Scollay Square-Dock Square district also performs an important visual function in the city. Here one enters the very heart of the metropolis; here is the key location which could, as the Boston Common does elsewhere, explain to the viewer the interrelations between many important sections of the city: the office district, the main shopping streets, Beacon Hill, the West End, the North End, the Central Artery, the markets and the harbor.

The present area does none of this, of course, but only leaves the mind and eye in utter confusion and dismay. In planning the Government Center there is a magnificent opportunity to produce a dramatic foreground for the heart of Boston, and to make a new focal point that would make clear and visible how the parts of the city fit together.

Objectives of the Plan

The fundamental objectives of any plan for the Government Center area can now be summarized:

1. To provide sites of adequate size and shape for the required new governmental structures—city, county, state and federal—giving them high accessibility, proper relation to each other, a direction for future expansion, and a fine setting. As the seat of government, the new city hall should occupy a prominent position.

2. To give Boston a new civic square, a new focus of community pride and activity.

3. To establish a visual harmony with the unique scale and character of central Boston; to build a fine entrance to the heart of the city; and to provide a focal point that will make clear how the various parts of the Boston peninsula fit together.

4. To stabilize the present values in the northern end of the central business district.

5. To replace the present declining taxable valuations in the area with new taxable valuation of at least the same, if not greater, amount, despite the new sites to be given over to tax-exempt public uses.

6. To maintain room for healthy and deeply rooted activities now in the area; to provide new space for those present commercial activities that can afford it; to ease the transition for those functions that must be displaced.

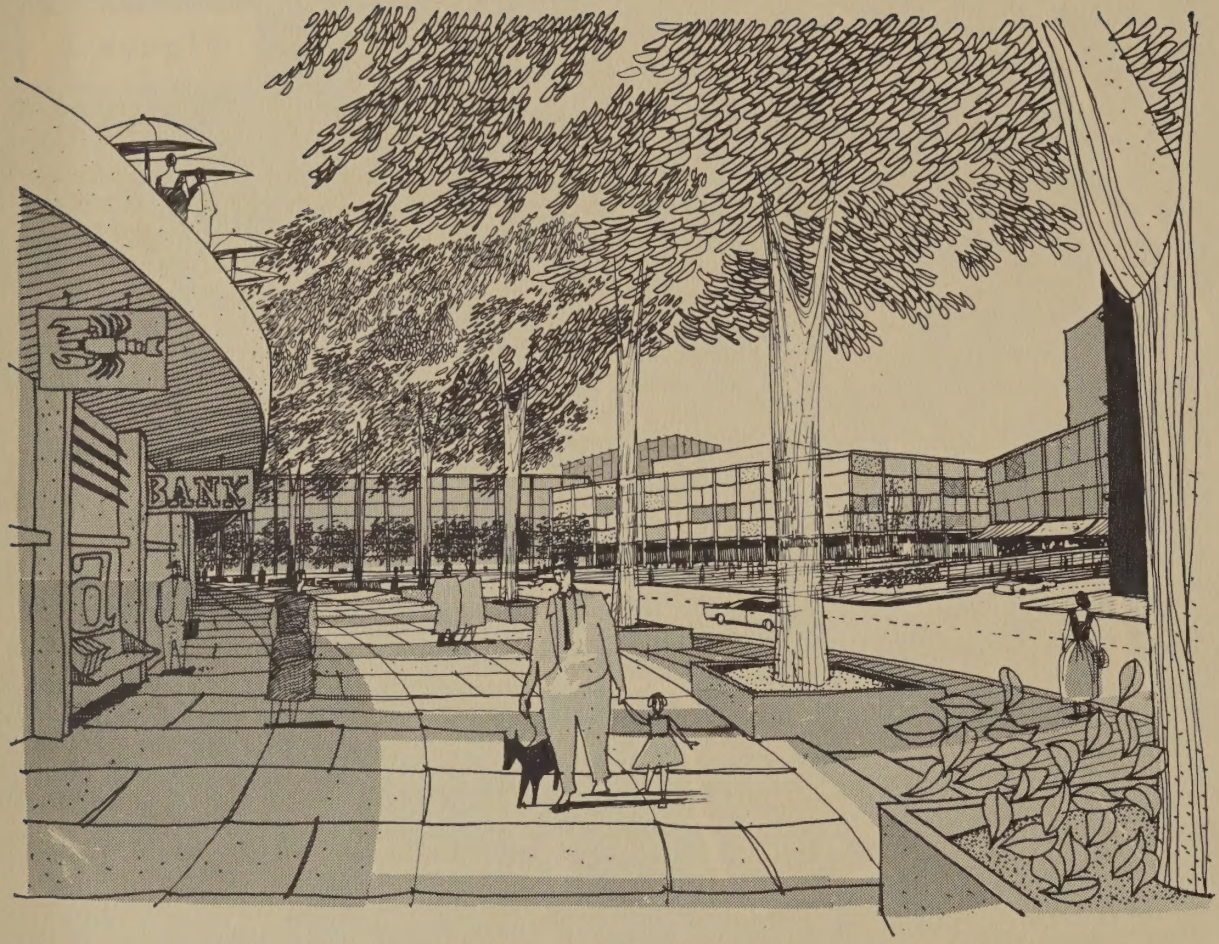
7. To preserve and renovate the existing historic monuments and sites, along with certain activities which add to the region's life, color and attractiveness.

8. To provide traffic capacities throughout the project area which will be adequate to handle the flows that can be delivered by the existing incoming channels and absorbed by the central streets, and which will allow reasonable choice in the use of private cars in off-peak hours.

9. To provide sufficient automobile parking to meet the needs of Government Center users who will drive their own cars under the traffic policy outlined above, as well as to provide some surplus for the use of those destined for the central business district.

With these general objectives in mind, the long chain of consideration and study traversed in the development of the plan may be passed over, to go directly to a description and analysis of the specific recommendations.

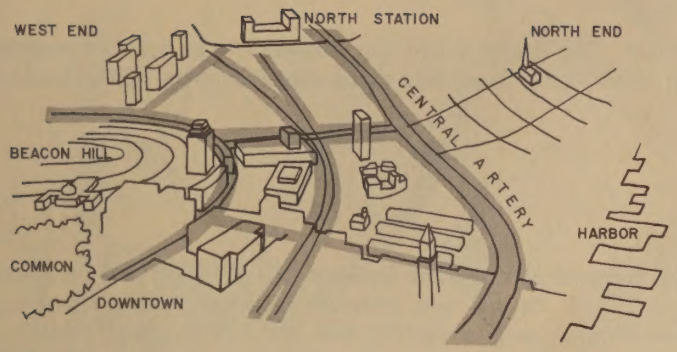
EXISTING CONDITIONS AT THE SITE



Approaching the square from Tremont Street

II — THE RECOMMENDED PLAN

The proposed plan has three essential features that determine all its details: a basic radial pattern of streets, a zoning of activities into three general areas, and a descending "valley" of interlinked public open spaces. These three features are indicated in the diagrams accompanying the text below. They are the decisions that give form to the whole. An over-all sense of the proposal is shown in the General View, Fig. 5, (page 27), while a more exact description is given by the General Plan, Fig. 7 (insert, back cover).



Vehicular Circulation

The circulation system, the essential nature of which is given in the diagram above, is shown more precisely in the Circulation Plan, Fig. 3, (page 15). It substitutes a new and orderly pattern for the matted tangle of old streets. This pattern bases itself on the presence of Beacon Hill, the Central Artery, and the northern edge of the central core, to which most traffic is destined. The pattern consists of three major channels which sweep in great parallel arcs from northwest to southwest: the present Central Artery with its associated ground-level surface streets; a new four-lane extension of Congress and Devonshire Streets to meet Portland and Merrimac Streets; and a clarification of the present Tremont-Cambridge Street connection. These channels will respectively carry: 1) metropolitan traffic flows; 2) traffic to or from the office district and North Station; and 3) traffic to or from Cambridge, the central shopping areas, and the more southerly parts of the central district. At the boundaries of the project, Tremont Street will remain one-way southbound, and Congress-Devonshire, as well as Portland-Merrimac, will be one-way pairs feeding into the new Congress Street.

Along the Central Artery, from Haymarket Square to North Street, the ground-level surface drives will be reorganized to form a large-scale wheeling movement, interconnecting the Artery itself, the existing and projected tubes of the Sumner Tunnel, and the entrance to the downtown area. By this reorganization, by elimination of the largely unused southbound on-ramp at North Street and by modification of the lower end of the southbound off-ramp at this point (or possibly its elimination), the heavy flows of traffic caused by the Artery and Tunnel can be handled with no weaving movements. This will be a significant improvement over the congestion now reigning near the Tunnel approaches. The reorganized pattern should also be capable of managing the heavy new flows from the additional tube of the Tunnel, despite the unfortunate compression within a restricted space of Tunnel mouths, Artery ramps and major city streets.

From the northern end of this wheel of traffic, at the present Haymarket Square, a new street would be directed radially inwards, crossing the new Congress Street on a grade separation and reaching Cambridge Street just south of the present New England Telephone Building. This will be a broad four-lane road and will be the basic interconnection between Cambridge-Tremont Streets, Congress Street, the Artery and the Tunnel. Into it, at the elevated grade, will feed the present southbound Artery off-ramp at Haymarket Square. (This same off-ramp may be extended as the feeder to the Tunnel, substituting for the present North Street off-ramp.) Haymarket Square itself would be eliminated, as it would be incapable of handling the expected future load, and Washington Street North would be diverted into Congress Street, to prevent confusion with the Artery and Tunnel traffic.

This major new radial, therefore, becomes a principal path for any driver wishing to get on or off the Artery, or to enter or leave the Sumner Tunnel. The present surface road under the Artery, now little used except for parking, will also be put to use for these exits and entrances. Thus drivers north-bound on the Artery, who wish to get off and enter the northern end of the central district, would leave the Artery near Fort Hill Square, and move north along the ground-level drive, turning off near their destinations. This will prevent the blocking of the Tunnel mouths, or disruption of the North End.

State Street would be improved by a street widening at the corner of Chatham Row, where the present sidewalks would be put into arcades in the existing buildings for a brief distance. School Street would be realigned to connect with Water Street, thus allowing an eventual extension all the way to the Artery, as shown by dotted lines on the Circulation Plan. Both these streets, in conjunction with the existing Broad Street, will allow a more direct route from the central business district to the Tunnel and to and from the Artery, thus relieving traffic pressure on the Government Center area itself. On-street parking on State and School Streets, and on the ground-level drive under the Artery, must be prohibited to make use of these improvements.

It may be seen that, while they are an integral part of the Government Center proposal, much of the necessity for the major changes recommended springs from the presence of the Artery and the Sumner Tunnel. Even without the Center some such improvements would be necessary, particularly as a second tube is already under construction.

Within the project area itself, certain other radial streets would be preserved to allow local movements and interconnections: principally Hanover Street between Tremont and Blackstone Streets, and Court Street between Tremont and State Streets. Other minor service roads are planned or retained as shown in Fig. 4.

The new system may thus readily be comprehended, while moving through it, as a set of circumferentials sweeping around Beacon Hill, connected by one major, and several minor, radial streets which fan out from the hill like spokes from a wheel. This will establish the transition between the West End and the central district, between Beacon Hill, the Artery, the North End and the harbor.

Traffic flows on these major streets will be heavy, but within the capacity provided. Flows in vehicles per day along some of these streets are estimated as follows: Cambridge Street: 34,000; new Congress Street 49,000; new Sudbury radial: 26,000; Washington Street North 24,000. These estimates correspond to a time when the new Sumner Tunnel tube will be open, the major expressways connected to the Central Artery, and the Massachusetts Turnpike will have reached the center, whether via a direct connection or through the completion of the Inner Belt.

This new pattern of streets will not only carry the traffic more efficiently and be easy to comprehend as a pattern, but will also result in good areas for development, adequately sized and protected from traffic intrusion. The historic area about Faneuil Hall will be restored to the pedestrian, tourist or shopper; new civic spaces can be laid out; government buildings can be furnished with adequate sites and fine settings; and sizable areas of economic shape will be produced for private development.

This result is achieved by elimination of many of the old streets, such as Cornhill, Brattle, Friend and Elm, and the re-alignment of many others. The most important street eliminated would be Washington Street, which would be closed from Court Street to Haymarket Square, with a pedestrian way continuing from Court Street to the present Cornhill. Washington Street at present cuts diagonally across the entire area, disrupting any orderly use of the land and confusing the traffic flows. Its closure would leave intact the important connection of Washington Street North to the Charlestown Bridge, and allow the trickle of cars that now moves through lower Washington Street to turn off at Milk or Water Streets for Congress Street, or at Court Street to reach Cambridge-Tremont Street. This closure would also dovetail with an eventual conversion of lower Washington Street into a pedestrian shopping street, should this occur.

Parking

The proposed plan provides for some 2250 off-street parking spaces, as shown in Fig. 3. Several new structures will have internal parking for their own tenants, such as the city hall, the federal office building, and the proposed private structure at Devonshire and Court Streets. A number of new public or commercial parking garages are also proposed, principally in the vicinity of Sudbury and Congress Streets. A new parking garage is proposed just outside the project boundary, opposite the federal site on Washington St. Surface parking areas would be confined to the region north of Sudbury Street.

To these 2250 new off-street spaces may be added 300 on-street spaces, for a total of 2550 spaces. This corresponds with 1970 legal spaces existing in the area today, of which 1620 are off-street and 350 are on-street. Therefore, despite the substantial reduction in street length, total parking spaces will be increased by 30 percent. It must be recognized, however, that even this total of 2550 spaces must serve an estimated future working population of 25,000 governmental and private employees. It is unlikely that in the future a car space can be provided for each person who might like to drive in to work. The limit will not be set so much by the parking spaces provided (which could be substantially expanded by more garage construction), as by the traffic capacity of the incoming roads and the ability of drivers to pay economic charges for the use of parking garages. The type and distribution of parking spaces proposed is felt to be a reasonable reflection of these limits, and will certainly be adequate to allow good access by private car at other than peak hours.

It must also be recognized that, even beyond the parking requirements of the project area itself, the new development inevitably eliminates some surface parking which is now serving the central office district. Some of the proposed garage spaces would be available to employees and visitors of the office area, but it would become even more desirable to provide additional parking garages at the northern edge of the central district, as proposed by the City Planning Board. One suggested location is shown on Washington Street, opposite the new federal building.

Figure 3

CIRCULATION PLAN

N

0 100 200 300 400 500 600 700 FEET

Public Transit

Many workers and visitors to the new Government Center area will therefore enter by transit, in the future even as now. In fact, the excellent subway service in the area is considered to be one of its greatest assets. All the present subway stations would be retained: Scollay, Bowdoin, Adams, Milk-State, Friend-Union, and Haymarket. All but Milk-State would be rebuilt above-ground; one would be remodeled under-ground as well. It may be noted from a careful study of the plan that the rather irregular underground layout of the existing subways has often been decisive in the proposed pattern of buildings and uses. Many pedestrian ways and spaces are sited over these hidden easements.

Most extensive work would be done on the Scollay Square station. It would be improved and enlarged, making it a more pleasant locality below-ground, and connecting it directly with the civic square above. The plan also leaves a right-of-way for the eventual construction of a subway extension from the end of Hanover Street to Park Street, an improvement much needed in order to remove the bottleneck along the Tremont line from Park Street to Scollay Square. When this extension is accomplished, the Scollay station would be further remodeled to allow an extended between-tracks platform on the north-bound line which runs below the present Cornhill, and a crossover over the south-bound tracks under the pedestrian stairs leading down from Pemberton Square. These two platforms would be connected underground to each other, and to an escalator running up to Pemberton Square. This station would be the principal transit entrance to the Government Center.

The Bowdoin, Adams, and Friend-Union stations will also take on added importance due to their proximity to large numbers of private and government employees. Each must be re-designed on the surface to fit into their new locations, whether attached to a new private office building on Hanover Street (the Friend-Union station), or placed in the forecourt of the city hall on Congress Street (the Adams station), or sited in the open space fronting on the new state office building (the Bowdoin station). The present Haymarket station will be separated from the Government Center by the new Sudbury Street, but with the elimination of the traffic circle it will become much more accessible to the other surrounding areas, the North End in particular.

Present recommendations do not include detailed proposals for the redesign of these stations, with the exception of the general form above-ground of the Adams and Scollay stations. Careful and imaginative design will be needed, in a visual as well as a functional sense, if the experience of entering the area by subway is to be a pleasant and attractive one. It is in these stations that thousands of newcomers and daily workers will receive their first impression of the new development.

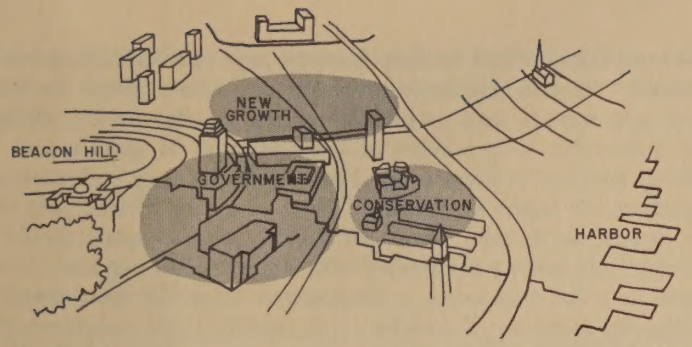
One further transit location is recommended in the Circulation Plan, Fig. 3. This is a new bus station on Hanover Street near Congress Street, on the fringe of the conservation area. It will replace the present berths of the MTA and the Eastern Massachusetts Street Railway in Haymarket Square. This will bring the terminal closer to its downtown passengers, and tie it in with the Friend-Union subway station. It will be located in conjunction with a parking garage, and at the terminus of the pedestrian way from the North End.

Movement on Foot

At present, pedestrian circulation is just as confused and just as irritating as is the circulation by car. It is even more dangerous: the area is notorious for its fatalities. Nevertheless, there is heavy foot movement, particularly up and down the Pemberton Square-Court Street-State Street axis, and along the north-south line of movement for commuters between the central business district and North Station.

By its basic street system, the plan clarifies the pedestrian flow as well as the vehicular movements. In addition, the upper end of Washington Street is kept open for those on foot, to allow direct access from the principal shopping street into the Government Center. The new space in front of the federal building would be connected by a footway to the principal square, and also by a path through King's Chapel burial ground and thence by a pedestrian easement to Pemberton Square. The present tidal wave of commuters, who at the peak hours now press through many narrow streets and alleys on their way to or from the trains at North Station, would now be directed along the new Congress Street. To shelter and invite this movement, a handsome pedestrian arcade is proposed along the east side of this street.

The plan also provides a major new pedestrian axis, which would drop downhill from Pemberton Square, through the new city square, through Cornhill, and into the space before Faneuil Hall. Except for two street crossings, this axis would be entirely given over to the man on foot. The new squares themselves would be delightful places through which to stroll, as would the broad walk and arcade along Tremont Street at the foot of Beacon Hill, or the narrow ways of the historic area to the east. Although the area as a whole must continue to be a zone of thick-set traffic streets and transit lines, it would provide far more for the pleasure of those who choose to go on foot.



The Governmental Zone

The diagram above indicates the division of the project area into three zones: the Government Center proper, the conservation area, and the zone of new growth, north of Sudbury and Hanover Streets. These are again shown more precisely in the General Plan, Fig. 7.

The government uses themselves would be sited at the foot of Beacon Hill just north of the principal business district. Here they will be conveniently close to each other, to the existing state and county structures on the hill, to the City Hall Annex, and to the Post Office building and the major downtown business offices and stores to the south. The civic uses must be close to the commercial uses both for functional and for psychological reasons. Were they removed northwards, they would be less convenient and be deprived of life. They would also leave an economic vacuum between themselves and the business center.

Since this zone is close to the commercial heart of the city, it is also a location for private uses which thrive on convenience and the flow of potential customers. In addition, the large numbers of government employees and visitors will in themselves generate substantial demands for services, and for such special facilities as space for lawyers' offices.

Therefore the basic concept of the governmental zone proper, lying roughly between School, Congress, and Sudbury Streets and Pemberton Square, is that it be the general locus of the major public buildings, but interwoven with private offices, shops and restaurants. The latter uses would be in somewhat smaller buildings but would be sited in the key commercial spots. These private uses would draw on the trade of the Government Center, replace the taxable values eliminated by its construction, and give the area the life and movement that a purely official zone often lacks.

Most of these uses would face in upon a new civic square, some 250 by 500 feet in dimension. This new square should have a new name consistent with its importance as the central focus of the Government Center area, the principal event on entering or leaving central Boston from the north.

The city hall, as the seat of government, is considered to be the principal symbolic building. It would have the key location on the downhill side of this square: Cambridge Street, Tremont Street and Court Square being visually focussed on it. It would dominate the area, not by its height, but by its position with respect to the open spaces around it and by the quality of its design, just as the Old State House is presently the head of State Street, despite the vastly larger size of the surrounding buildings. The architectural design of the city hall will indeed be crucial to the success of the whole, and should be attended to with great care. The exterior envelope here recommended is the result of careful three-dimensional study. It calls for a six-story structure with a central courtyard.

Beyond these symbolic considerations, the city hall is placed here for its closeness to the City Hall Annex, to the law and business offices of the central district, and to the county courts. The city hall site and the new square may be maintained and operated as a single unit, providing a fine setting for civic ceremonials. As a lower building, the city hall will conform to the wedge-shaped "valley" of height control referred to below in the discussion of open spaces. For these reasons—for its size, its symbolic importance, its functional connections, and the meaning and activity it will provide as the focus of the square—this is considered to be the most appropriate location for this building. Any revision of this basic decision would necessitate a thorough revision of the plan.

The new federal offices have been located on the block bounded by School, Washington and Court Streets, and the line City Hall Avenue—Court Square. The resulting building would be twelve to fifteen stories high and a plan form has been suggested in Fig. 7. The offices would front at one end on a small new open space created by the demolition of the present city hall, which opening will merge visually with the King's Chapel burial ground, and have a visible link, via Court Square, with the principal square. At their northern end, the offices would face the Old State House, and have a diagonal view of the main square itself.

The site as planned would have streets on four sides, and immediate access to two subway stations. It lies close between the main Post Office, the Veterans Administration building, and the federal operations in the Houghton-Dutton building. The occupation of this half-derelict block will close the last gap in the northern end of the retail district, and will bring many potential customers to this point. It also allows a re-alignment

of School Street to permit a continuous path from Beacon Street to Congress Street, and perhaps eventually to the Central Artery.

The east branch of Court Square would be extended south along the edge of the federal site to connect with Province Street. The west branch would become a service access to the existing buildings. The west sidewalk of this branch would be widened and improved to make a pleasant walkway from the federal square to the principal civic open space. If the School Board should occupy the present City Hall Annex, a forty-foot extension could readily be attached to the south end of the building, as shown in Fig. 7. This would contain a hearing room, display space, and other requirements of the Board. The service road could pass around this extension, or more desirably under it, as shown in the Circulation Plan and the General Plan.

Rebuilding in this area and the re-alignment of School Street unfortunately but necessarily take the site of the Old Corner Book Store (The Thomas Creese House).

Even though this building is in poor condition, it is of great historical and architectural interest. It is therefore recommended that it be moved to a position in the southern portion of Hancock Row, as shown in the General Plan, Fig. 7. Here it could be restored to its original condition, and take its place in the total historical setting.

The principal private building fronting on the new square would be a curving structure on the slope between Pemberton Square and the central plaza, sitting on a terrace formed by a shopping arcade at the level of Tremont Street. It would rise about twelve stories above the Tremont Street level. While occupying a complex site, this is a prime commercial location since it makes connection with the Tremont Street shopping section, looks out over lower buildings to the sea, and faces on the principal square. Eventually it will also face on a new Pemberton Square to the rear. It is located directly at the subway station and is highly visible from the principal automobile entrance. It has two potentially active levels for stores and restaurants—one with a semi-private terrace—and is ideally located for the prestige offices of lawyers and other professionals. Again, its detailed design will be critical to the success of the whole, and the recommended controls as to height, bulk setbacks and pedestrian and visual easements have been carefully prepared.

Between Hanover and Sudbury Streets a large new superblock has been developed. Its size, regularity of shape, immediate access to Tunnel, Artery, and subway, and prominent position on the square, all should make it desirable for a number of different kinds of development. The buildings sketched in the General Plan, Fig. 7, are only indicative of the possibilities. It might be developed as one unit, or divided into two or three parcels, on demand. That part fronting on the square should have a character and activity in harmony with the other fronting uses. Such occupants as a first-class hotel, a headquarters office, an opera house, or a merchandise mart, are all possible. It is suggested that occupancy of this area should include a substantial parking garage, as shown on the Circulation Plan, Fig. 3.

Other structures which would face the square are the Division of Employment Security building, which would continue the curve along Cambridge Street; a new five-story private building covering the flank of the Veterans Administration building, which would be an ideal location for restaurants or stores, perhaps with offices above; and a possible new private structure of six to twelve stories to replace the old building at the corner of Tremont and Court Streets. The present building could be left standing, without doing harm to the appearance of the square. If replaced, the minimum building envelope must be adhered to, if the continuity of facades is not to be destroyed. All these structures facing the main square should be vigilantly controlled as to their exterior appearance. The exact siting of the Division of Employment Security building should be co-ordinated with that of the new state office building. A treatment has been suggested in Fig. 7, showing a co-ordinated line of facades and a pedestrian bridge at the rear, connecting with a plaza on the upper side of the state offices.

Along the new open space of Cornhill, facing the side of the city hall and replacing a series of small obsolete structures, a new private office building of eleven or twelve stories is proposed. This would bridge over a pedestrian way on the former line of Washington Street, allowing a potential shopping arcade, and might contain internal parking for its tenants.

Above the main square, behind the new private structure, the present old County Courthouse on Pemberton Square would remain for some years. When the time comes for replacement of the old Courthouse, it can be torn down and the former Pemberton Square re-established, as shown in Fig. 7, the General Plan. This will complete the chain of open spaces from the crown of Beacon Hill to Faneuil Hall. The courthouse re-

placement can be placed on the south side of Pemberton Square, facing the present Courthouse Annex, and connected with it by an underground passage.

The Conservation Area

The area lying between Hanover Street, the new Congress Street, the back side of properties on State Street, and the Central Artery, has been designated as a "conservation area." Some of this lies within the land recommended for taking by the Redevelopment Authority, but much of it lies outside of this line. The recommendations of this section, therefore, are directed not solely to the Redevelopment Authority, but to the various city, federal and private agencies which would carry them out.

The color, historical meaning, and commercial vigor of this area have already been touched upon in the beginning of this report. The general outlines of the recommendations for this area are shown in Fig. 7. They are directed to the preservation or restoration of symbolic places, the encouragement of present activity, the prevention or removal of intrusions, and the enhancement of the present character.

What might be developed here is a quarter characteristic of Boston, but unusual in its intensity: where the symbols of the past stand in close contact with a lively present. Here the tourist would come to see the historic sites and the colorful market activity; the Bostonian would come to buy or to dine in intimate surroundings. The shops would thrive on the presence of both. Here could be the principal spot in the city for the retail-wholesale dealer in food, for speciality food and drug stores, for push-carts and fine restaurants. The area could provide unique services for Bostonians and visitors of many classes and interests. Most of these services are already there: it only remains to capitalize upon them.

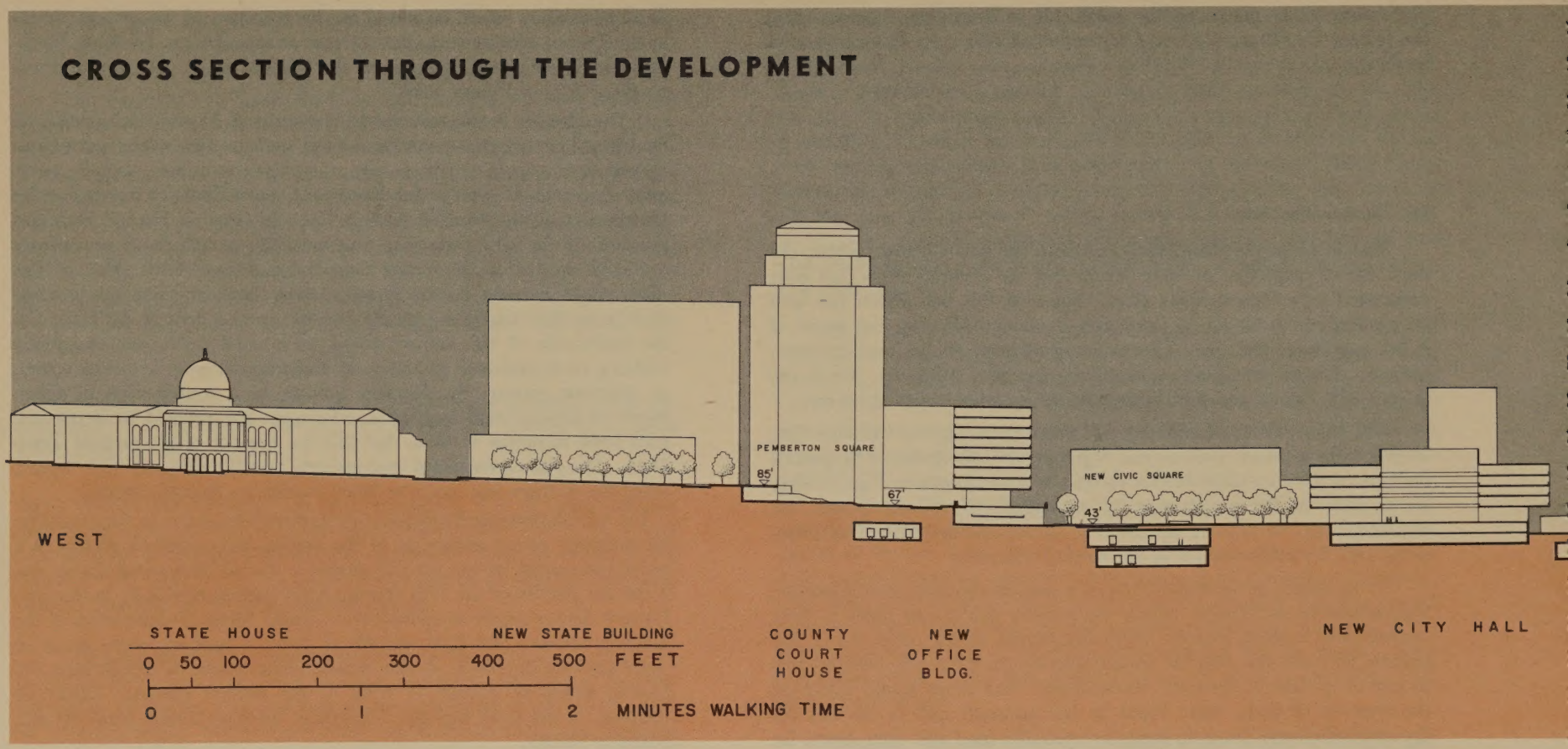
The first step is to disentangle the market trucks, tourists and market shoppers from the heavy traffic bound for the Tunnel and Artery, as would be accomplished by the circulation plan shown in Fig. 3. Local traffic in the conservation area would then connect with Congress Street at Hanover Street, with State Street at Merchant's Row and Commercial Street, with the present crossing under the Artery behind the North Market and directly via North Street with the Sumner Tunnel entrance. Local circulation would be served by the retention of the present streets in the Quincy Market area, plus the four streets (Union, Hanover, Blackstone and North) which surround the historic block, plus service drives on three sides of Faneuil Hall.

The Quincy, North and South Markets, and Faneuil Hall, would all be retained in their present shape and use, perhaps with minor restorations toward their original condition where opportunity offered, such as piecemeal restoration of parts of the North and South Rows, or removal of the skirting around the base of Faneuil Hall. In front of Faneuil Hall and enclosed by the new pedestrian arcade to the west a small new square would be created, incorporating the present Adams statue. Part of this space might be used by the flower market, while the retailers of meat could keep their traditional position on the ground floor of the Hall. On the north side of this square would be a small public or semi-public building of harmonious architectural character, housing a tourist center, an historical society, the Kirstein Library, or a combination of these. North of Faneuil Hall another paved market space would be developed, with some memorial to show that this was the site of the original Town Dock. The open space might appropriately take the name of Dock Square, while the western area could be called Adams, or Faneuil, Square.

The Union-Hanover-Blackstone-North block would also in large measure be preserved, with a restoration of the original internal street pattern as a pedestrian system for tourists and shoppers. As has been noted above, this is the last portion of the 17th century street pattern remaining in the city. Hatter's Square would be opened up to Union Street by demolition of the building between Salt Lane and Marsh Lane, a building which is out of character with the block. A new square, which might be named Hancock Square, would be opened in front of the historic Hancock House by clearance of the small triangle of buildings between Union, Hanover, and Marshall Streets.

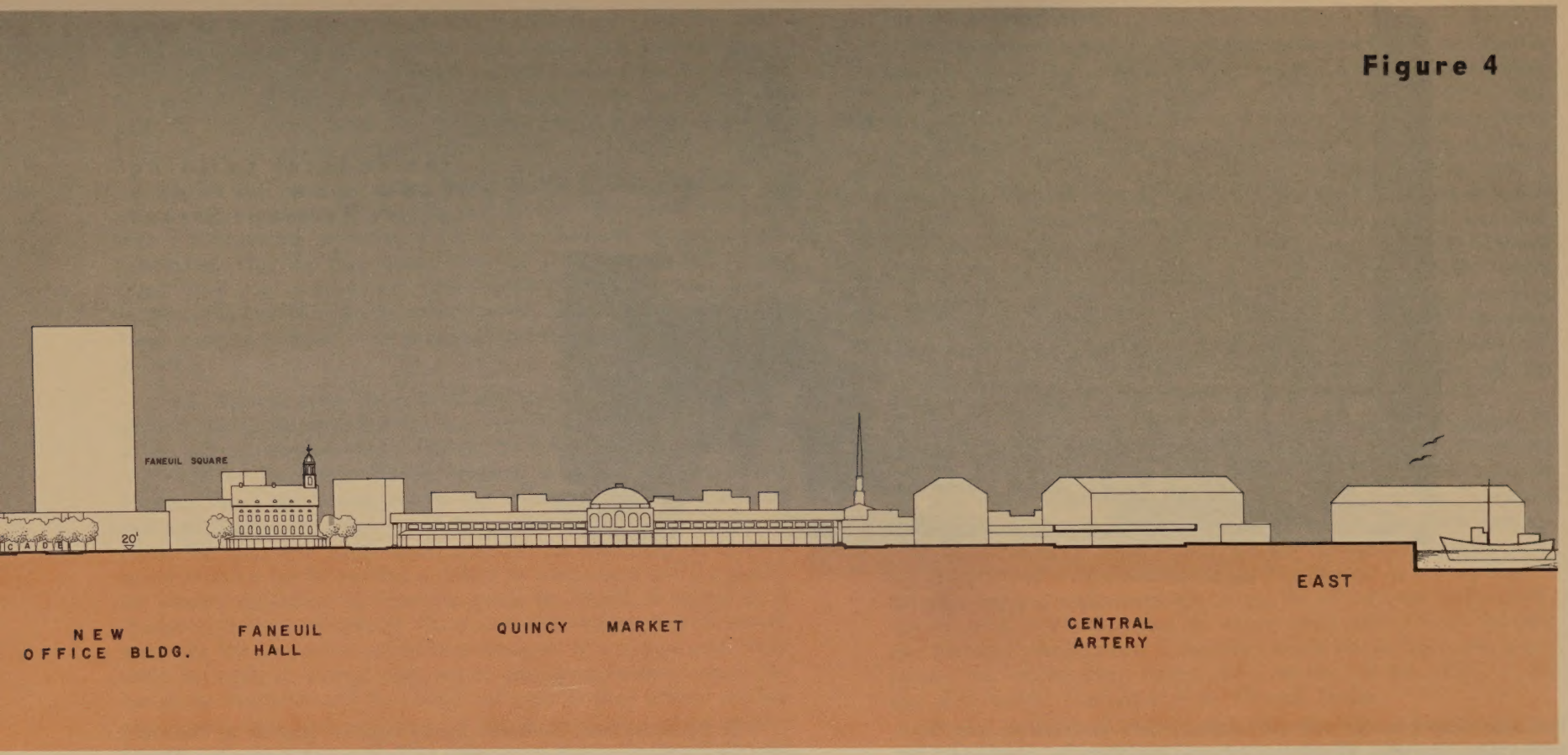
Both of these spaces, plus the present opening behind the Hancock House (the site of the former Hancock Row), would act as pleasant pedestrian enclosures, setting off the historic structures such as the Hancock House, the Old Corner Book Store, and the Union Oyster House, and suitable for such activities as outdoor dining or marketing. Being intimate in size, they would be in scale with the old buildings.

The Union Oyster House, the Hancock House, and the Boston Stone would be preserved. Present activities would be encouraged to continue as at present, or even to expand, as long as the architectural scale of the whole were not destroyed. In fact, the character of the area would only



reach full maturity when many more food specialty shops had been encouraged to set up business there. An attempt at restoration which displaced the present retail activities would not only be historically false, and cause economic loss to the city, but would destroy an essential ingredient of the area's life and character.

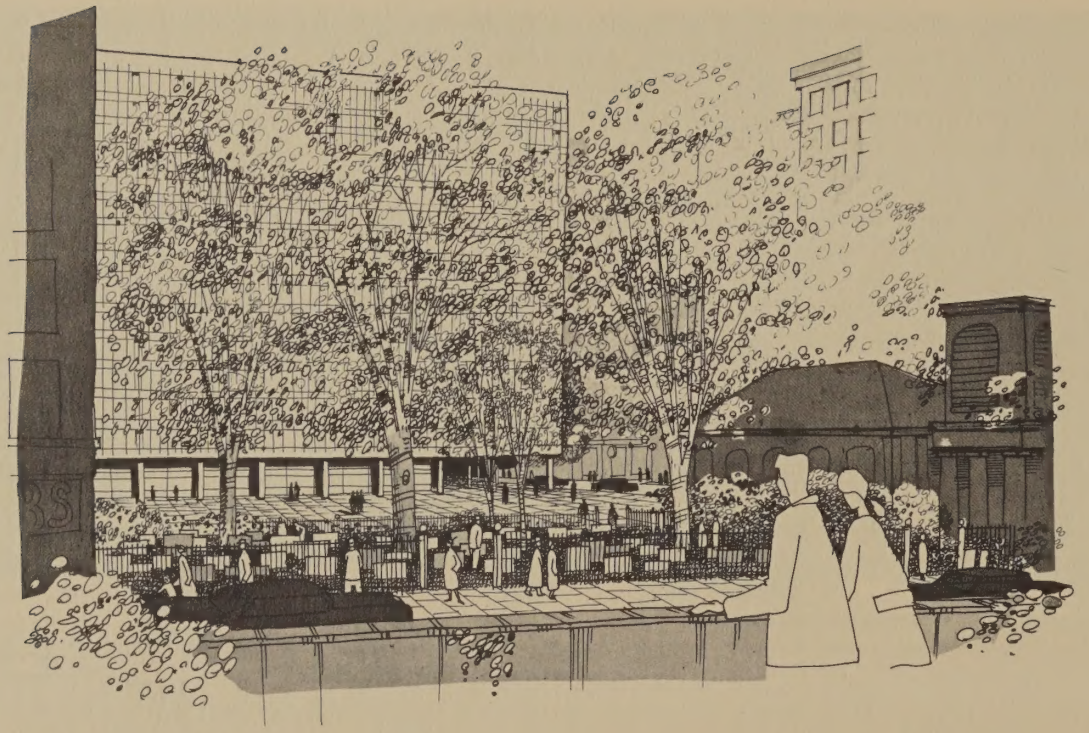
This policy should include the push-cart activities along Blackstone Street. Although the plan indicates that a portion of their present stand near Haymarket Square must be taken for access roads, it more than compensates for this loss by suggesting a push-cart market which might be covered, between North Street and Clinton Street. The core of the



present push-cart activity would be maintained as at present, free from traffic intrusion, with its links to both downtown and North End shoppers undisturbed.

The pedestrian underpass under the Central Artery at Hanover Street would be retained and broadened, so that it would connect with Hanover Street at both ends and would be of sufficient width to be used for food sales. Thus a continuous retail food market might be developed, stretching from Salem Street, under the Artery, along Blackstone, to the new Dock Square.

Between Union Street and the new Congress Street the land which



the federal building from new terrace above Tremont Street

had been cleared for the new road system would be developd with three to five story structures, in scale with the old buildings, but completing the setting on the east side of the city hall. Along the Congress Street facade would run the new pedestrian arcade. This frontage would be penetrated at one or two places by narrow footways. At the southern end, near Faneuil Hall, the new library tourist information center, or historical society headquarters would be located. To the north, the structures could be developed for marketing, restaurant or other retail use, by small offices, or by dealers in wholesale goods.

Three basic steps are recommended to effectuate these proposals, involving action by the Redevelopment Authority, by the city, and by a public or private historical agency, as follows:

The Redevelopment Authority should take the land up to Hanover and Union Streets, as well as the areas to be occupied by the new Dock and Adams Squares. This will allow the needed street changes to be accomplished, as well as the clearance and resale of the two areas for new development.

An historical agency should take over the Hancock House, the relocated Old Corner Book Store, the block of buildings including the Union Oyster House, and Faneuil Hall, as well as the two blocks of structures to be demolished: the triangle between Union-Hanover-Marshall Streets and the structure between Salt Lane and Marsh Lane. The agency might also take over the Quincy Market structure. The agency should

acquire the bed of internal streets which will become pedestrian ways: Salt Lane, Hatter's Square, Scottow's Alley, Creek Lane, Marshall Street and Marsh Lane. The Hancock House and Old Corner Book Stores could be remodelled as historical shrines, while present activities in Faneuil Hall, the Union Oyster block, and the Quincy Market if taken, should be continued under leasing arrangements.

Ideally, this historical agency would be the federal government itself, acting perhaps through the U.S. Park Service. This would be in line with a forthcoming recommendation by the National Historical Sites Commission that the Park Service take the Union-Hanover-Blackstone-North block as an historical area. It is possible that other agencies, public or semi-public, could be found to do this work of preservation and restoration. In any case, failure to do so would result in the loss of a unique opportunity.

The remainder of the conservation area could remain in private hands without disturbance, provided that the destruction or ruthless remodeling of the existing buildings were prevented. To this end, it is recommended that an historic zone be established, bounded by the new Congress Street, Hanover Street, the Central Artery, and Chatham Street extended east and west. Such a procedure would be possible under the provisions of House Bill 2185, now under consideration in the state legislature, which would permit a city to establish a district in which signs and changes to the exterior appearance of structures would be subject to control by a specially-appointed commission. These controls would be directed toward preserving the historic or architectural character of a unique area. They could not apply to internal plan, nor to existing appearance, nor to the use of the structures, and thus could not upset existing activity nor impose special costs. Such controls need not be vague nor highly complex. For example, controls might refer only to signs, and to the height and bulk, facing material, and the scale of fenestration of new construction. Such a limited list might be all that was required to preserve the essential character of the area.

Meanwhile, other improvements could be made by private action in individual buildings. A voluntary group, with interest in the area, might be formed to encourage such transformations, to bring in a greater variety of food specialties, or to advise the official bodies. But the institution of some special architectural controls throughout the area would be the only alternative to total acquisition by a public agency, if the special nature of the area is to be preserved.

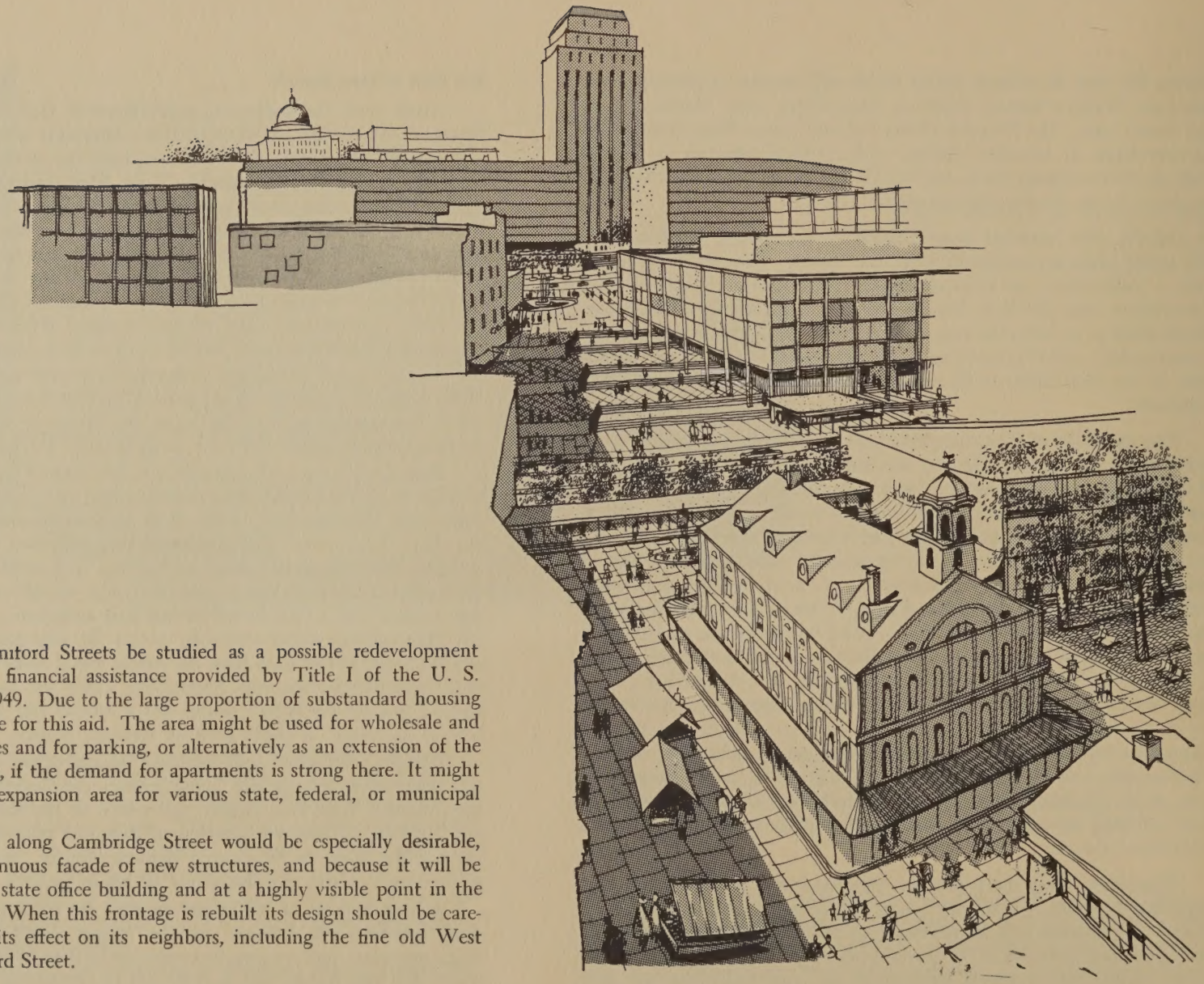
The Zone of New Growth

North from the Sudbury-Congress-Hanover line, as far as Chardon Street, would lie the area designated for somewhat less intensive private and public development. A new consolidated fire station would be sited on the parcel between Washington Street North and the Sudbury Street viaduct. North of this, as well as in the block between Sudbury and Chardon Streets, new manufacturing and wholesale buildings could be erected, for the use of the service firms and dealers in consumers goods whose present importance in the area has been outlined above. Every effort should be made to make these sites available early in the course of reconstruction, to allow businesses which are being displaced further south to find new quarters without leaving the area. It is clear from experience that redevelopment causes major relocation problems for small businesses. Many firms are forced out of a region in the search for new quarters, and many functional clusters of activities are needlessly dispersed and disrupted. Sites for close-by business relocation are therefore essential.

Parts of this same block might also be used for surface parking. At its eastern end, however, the parcel fronting on Cambridge Street and next to the New England Telephone building is suited for more intensive use. This might be an office structure, or an extension of the Telephone building itself. Similarly, while use of the land in the block between Hanover and Congress Streets and the Artery would include a low parking structure and a bus station on that part underlaid by subway lines, a tall office building might eventually occupy the solid ground to the northeast. Its visual prominence from the Artery would make it a very desirable spot for private development. Accessibility would also be high, with ample parking just off the Artery ramps, and a subway and bus station at the foot of the tower. It would front on Hancock Square.

Chardon, Merrimac and Staniford Streets define a keystone-shaped area some eleven acres in size. Lying between the Government Center and the proposed West End project, this would be the last pocket of dilapidated use in an otherwise continuous sweep of new development, from the Charles River to the central business district. In the long run, it seems clear that this area should not be left an isolated remnant.

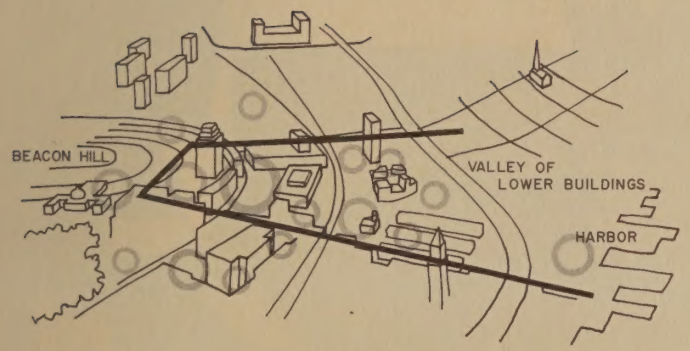
A large number of low-income families are resident in this keystone area, however—the remnant of the former West End population. Their relocation, and the present conditions of their housing, needs further study. For this reason, and in order not to over-extend the Government Center project, it is recommended that the project boundary be drawn at Chardon Street. It is further recommended that the keystone between



Faneuil Hall, Cornhill and the City Hall

Chardon and Stanford Streets be studied as a possible redevelopment project using the financial assistance provided by Title I of the U. S. Housing Act of 1949. Due to the large proportion of substandard housing it might be eligible for this aid. The area might be used for wholesale and manufacturing uses and for parking, or alternatively as an extension of the West End project, if the demand for apartments is strong there. It might also serve as an expansion area for various state, federal, or municipal agencies.

The frontage along Cambridge Street would be especially desirable, as part of a continuous facade of new structures, and because it will be opposite the new state office building and at a highly visible point in the curve of the road. When this frontage is rebuilt its design should be carefully studied for its effect on its neighbors, including the fine old West Church at Staniford Street.



The System of Public Open Spaces

The fundamental objective of the plan has been to provide for the functional and economic requirements of the Government Center, and to do so in such a way as to enhance the beauty of the city, and to provide pleasant places for Bostonians to walk and to congregate. To meet this desire, provision has been made in the plan for a chain of public open spaces noted in the diagram above, and shown more precisely in Figs. 5 and 7 (page 27 and insert). The sections, Fig. 4, (page 20) also illustrate some of these proposals. This chain of spaces will not only add to the delight of the city, but will be reflected in the increased attractiveness, and hence economic value, of the surrounding parcels.

The chain leads downhill from the crown of Beacon Hill at the State House, via Ashburton Place to the future Pemberton Square and then, via a flight of steps to the principal new square, and finally through a new Cornhill, across Congress Street and its arcade, into Adams Square in front of Faneuil Hall. In the future this footway might be extended through the market area out to the waterfront by means of an underpass at South Market Street. It would extend sideways as well, to link up with the pedestrian areas in the historic block, and with the new square on School Street. All these squares and footways would be furnished with fountains, sculpture, trees and benches, as suggested in the accompanying drawings.

This chain of spaces down from Beacon Hill would occur in a great "valley" of lower buildings, opening out like a wedge from the foot of the hill, with Hanover Street as the northern edge and the South Market-Cornhill line as its southern edge. This would enable the city hall and the structures at Pemberton Square to look out to the sea and to be visible from the Central Artery, and would visually connect the North End and the harbor to the center of the city. Moreover, it would retain the present dramatic sense of a "wall" of buildings along State and Court Streets, which marks the beginning of the city's business center. Finally, it would prevent any further intrusions on that part of the skyline where they would destroy the silhouette of the State House dome as it crowns the crest of Beacon Hill. For all these reasons, it was felt important to maintain a wedge-shaped valley of lower buildings here, down through which the chain of small open spaces might run like a river, and to confine the higher structures to locations on or north of Hanover Street. This reinforced the location of the conservation area, and the choice of a lower envelope for the city hall itself.

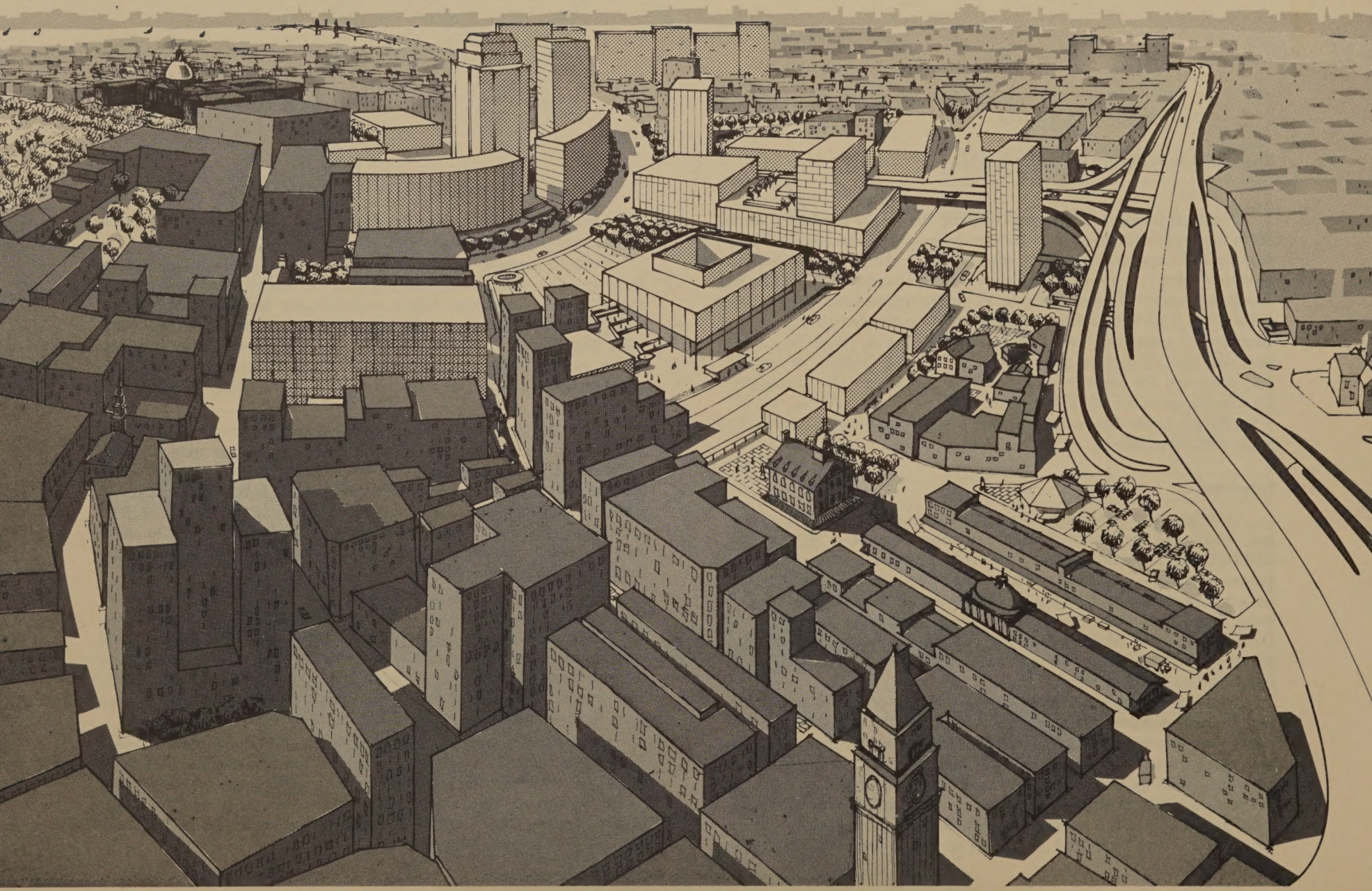
In all this work it is important to keep in mind the connections to the surrounding areas. All too many renewal projects result in bright new developments, completely divorced from the fabric of the existing city. Therefore every approach into the area or into the city center has been carefully studied for its effect, as well as for the views to be given to drivers on the Artery. The pedestrian entrances have also been considered, such as up Court Square from the King's Chapel burial ground, down Washington into Cornhill, or up from the subway station into the new square itself. Each space was thought of, not by itself alone, but as part of a sequence which would be seen by people in motion. The Government Center has been brought as close up to the old central area as possible, and tightly related to it. The resulting contrast of old and new would be one of the more pleasant features of the scheme. Some of these characteristics are illustrated in the accompanying perspectives.

The approaches and links, the major chain of spaces, the wedge-shaped valley of controlled height, all of these would come to their climax at the new square. Here would be located the principal buildings. Here are recommended the most precise controls over facades, bulk, shape and disposition on the ground. These controls have been detailed in an appendix to this report.

Negative controls alone will not do the job, however. There must be positive encouragement and stimulus for good design, and cooperation should be developed between the architects designing the various buildings fronting on the square. The details of the square itself will also be crucial: the paving, planting, lighting, fountains or sculpture; the form of the subway station or the shape of the street furniture. Therefore, there must be continuing design advice, which can guide the project in every detail until its final completion.

general view of the
proposed development

Figure 5



III — IMPLICATIONS OF THE PLAN

The total project covers an area of some 56½ acres, of which 6 acres are in uses within the boundaries but not to be taken. The proposed plan would provide approximately 21½ acres of new building sites in addition to these 6 acres in present sites which will be left undisturbed. Of the remaining 29 acres, 20 acres would be in public rights-of-way (streets and walks), and 9 acres in public open spaces. For a detailed picture of the allocation of space, the Land Disposition Plan, Fig. 6, (page 29), shows each site created by the proposal, as well as the location of project boundaries and the properties excluded from the taking. The accompanying schedule gives the size of each plot.

Changes in the Government Center area are summarized statistically in the following table:

Relocation

One important implication of the proposal is its effect on the present uses which will be displaced in the resulting clearance. Within the boundaries of the redevelopment project most existing uses will be removed, but there are some exceptions to the general clearance: the County Courthouse and its annex, the substantial structures along Tremont, Court and State Streets, the City Hall Annex, the Houghton-Dutton building on Beacon Street, the Telephone building on Cambridge Street, the City Welfare buildings on Chardon Street, and the Edison sub-station on Hawkins Street.

The uses displaced are most generally operating in obsolete buildings. Previous sections of this report have stressed the desirability of preparing new sites for displaced activities, wherever they are able to buy or rent new quarters. Other activities will probably move small distances, into older buildings to the north and east. Some way should be found to pay compensation to existing firms for at least part of their relocation costs, in addition to full market value for their premises. Such relocation compensation should be paid to tenants as well as owners. Where possible, clearance should be staged so that rents in other areas are not forced up artificially.

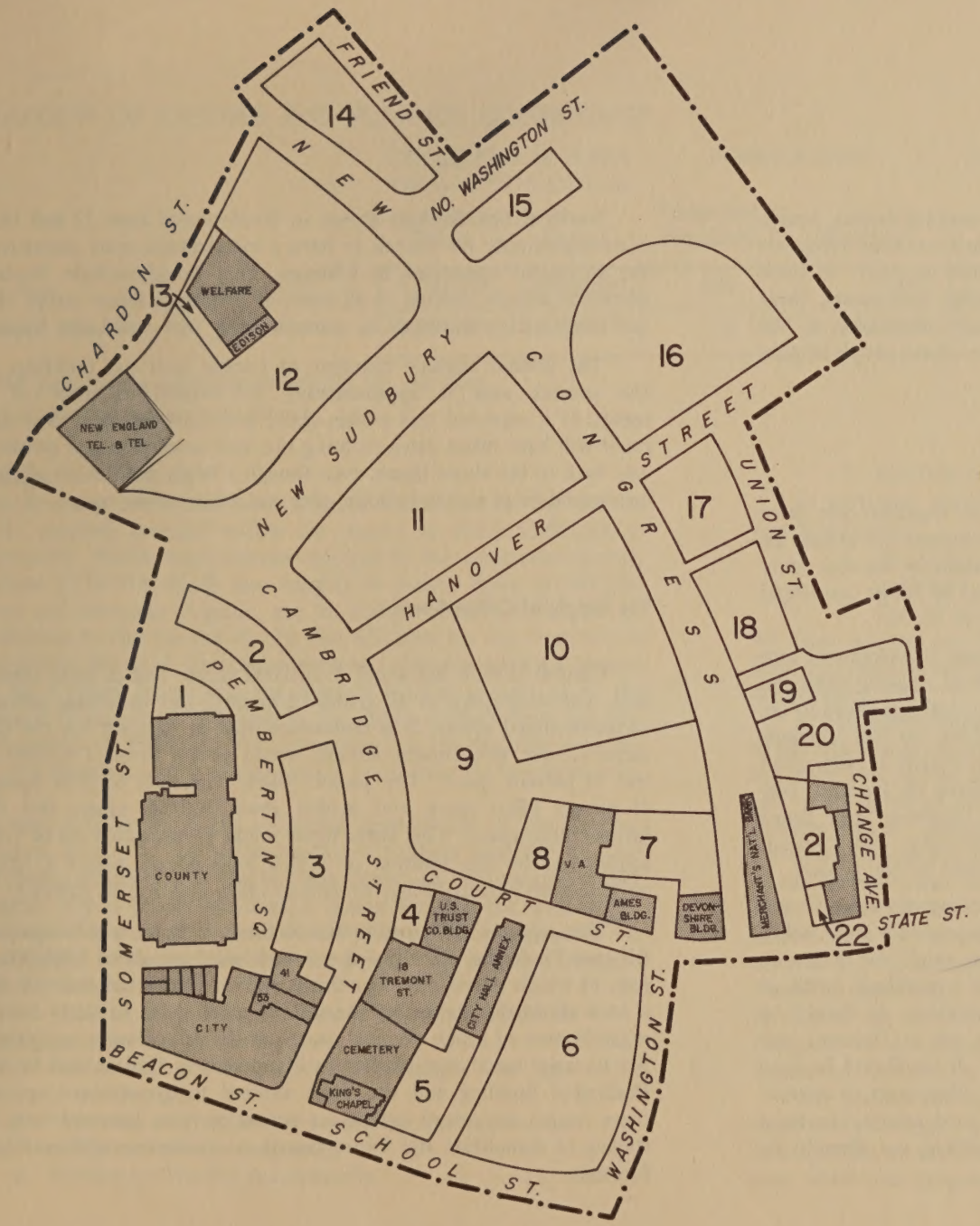
Other businesses, certain local retail outlets in particular, may be forced to close down, since not only they but their clientele will be uprooted by the changeover. Where establishments have more than purely local significance they would be able to relocate in some of the new structures planned for, or into the conservation area east of Congress Street. There are five banks now active in the clearance area, and one or two of these would probably desire to move into new buildings in the project area.

The rather dilapidated office space on the upper floors of the existing buildings is occupied principally by tenants able to pay only marginal rents. Much of this space is vacant, or used only for dead storage. There are also a few small structures whose principal use is for office space, and whose condition ranges from poor to only partially obsolete. Most of these at best lack modern services. Some of their tenants will be able to afford new and more efficient quarters, others will shift to other older office buildings to the south and east.

Active planning should be done to guide these shifts of displaced firms. Studies should be made to discover their needs and functional linkages, to furnish advice and information with which these firms could make rational decisions. It may be that related groups of firms could move together into new locations, or could find other solutions to their problems by joint action. At the very least, such a planning effort would keep open the communications between city agencies and displaced business.

One public function which will be displaced is the Kirstein Business Library on City Hall Avenue. It is essential that this important reference library be relocated close to the center of business activity. It might take a new position on the Congress Street arcade (parcels 19 or 21, Fig. 6), or rent space at Court and Tremont Streets (parcel 4), or in the buildings along Cornhill (parcels 7 or 8).

Figure 6



PARCEL AREAS	
PARCEL NUMBER	AREA (SQUARE FEET)
1	9,500
2	24,800
3	46,300
4	6,700
5	21,200
6	108,100
7	29,200
8	16,400
9	145,700
10	137,200
11	136,500
12	181,000
13	6,900
14	37,800
15	22,300
16	107,600
17	29,100
18	28,400
19	7,900
20	45,700
21	14,100
22	2,600

LAND DISPOSITION PLAN

N

100 0 100 200 300 400 500 600 FEET

Scattered throughout the area are a number of rooming houses, hotels, and about seventy-five apartments. For the unattached transient occupants of the rooming houses and hotels, who may number as many as three hundred, as well as the occupants of the seventy-five apartments, these will be relocation problems. Even if small in scale comparable to the magnitude of the project the difficulties and needs of these people require immediate study.

Marketability of New Private Sites

Complete information on marketability and the expected sale price of private sites is not as yet available, but some conclusions can already be drawn from the detailed analysis now under preparation by the real estate consultant. These estimates will of course be affected by future municipal tax policy.

The new office building below Pemberton Square (development area 3 in Fig. 6) can become Boston's top office building, drawing from the entire business center those concerns that wish to be, and can afford to be, identified with the best. The small structure backing on the Veterans Administration building (area 8) will be ideal for restaurant or other retail use, with special offices above. The new office building on Cornhill (development area 7) will draw its tenants from the adjoining State Street district and from the better office buildings on Washington and Tremont Streets and Pemberton Square, which would be cleared by the project.

Lots on the east side of Congress Street (development areas 17 and 18) would be adapted for sale to smaller owner-occupants for store, office or wholesale use, with or without parking. These might be primarily dealers in food, or in hard goods. Use of the new superblock north of Hanover Street (area 11) is open to many possibilities. It should be reserved for a major development. The half-circle site at Hanover and Congress Streets (development area 16) would in all likelihood be used for flat parking for a number of years. Due to its advantages of accessibility and publicity from the Artery, it provides a good reserve site for a use similar to the Travelers Insurance Company building, not directly dependent on the general office area.

North of new Sudbury Street, in development areas 12 and 14, there is an opportunity for Boston to have a merchandise mart patterned after the successful operations in Chicago. This would include display and wholesale activity dealing in all types of consumer items except clothing and food. Other wholesale or manufacturing uses could also locate here.

The present assessed valuation of taxable land and buildings within the project area is approximately $15,560,000 exclusive of abatements. It is expected that within about five years sufficient new development will have taken place to bring the total assessment on private property back to the above figure, even though a larger proportion of the total area would be in public building sites and other public uses.

The Supply of Office Space

Central Boston has about 17,000,000 square feet of gross office floor area, including space of all grades of quality, and including institutional owner-occupied offices. It is understood that in carrying out the Government Center, government services would vacate about 1,400,000 square feet of present space. The project would demolish 650,000 square feet of private office space, and re-offer about 800,000 square feet of new private office space. This latter figure could be expanded up to 1,500,000 square feet by the addition of a new building on parcel 4, tall office structures on parcels 12 and 16, and an office building on parcel 11.

The capacity of Boston to absorb this new space will be tempered by the new Prudential office building, which will have about 1,000,000 square feet, of which it will offer two-thirds. When Prudential built in Chicago it took about three years for the shift in office space to settle down, with rehabilitation of much existing space and the fall of some marginal facilities to lower use. A similar pattern is expected in Boston, due to the new Prudential building and the space vacated by government agencies. If these factors are spread out over a period of time, however, with proper staging of demolition and improvement, no insurmountable problems are foreseen.

COMPARISON OF EXISTING AND PLANNED CONDITIONS*

	GROSS FLOOR AREA OF ALL BUILDINGS (square feet)		POPULATION		TOTAL PARKING SPACES (on-street and off-street)	STREETS AND SIDEWALKS (acres)
	Public	Private	Permanent Residents	Working		
Existing Area	1,200,000	4,600,000**	150	5,600	1,970	25
Redeveloped Area	1,900,000	4,300,000	0	up to 25,000	2,550	20

* In the project area, including structures left standing

** 20% of this floor area is now vacant.

Project Costs

A preliminary estimate has been made of $20,865,000 for the costs of taking the property included within the project of which $1,481,000 is public property. Street improvements required by the scheme are estimated at about $3,100,000 which may roughly be broken down as $900,000 for streets and sidewalks at grade, and for traffic controls; $1,700,000 for ramp additions to the Central Artery; and $500,000 for the viaduct over Congress Street. Much of the ramp and viaduct improvements are chargeable to the Central Artery and the Sumner Tunnel as well as to the Government Center itself. Changes in the public utility system are estimated to cost about $500,000. No information is as yet available as to the costs of new transit facilities, of demolition, or of other site improvements.

Controls

An important factor in the successful development of the Government Center project is the establishment of controls over the use and physical characteristics of land and building. Although such controls would legally apply only to private buildings, it is expected that the spirit of the proposed regulations would be adhered to by the agencies responsible for the construction of public buildings. In general the proposed controls cover the following:

1. Controls establishing the various uses which would be permitted on a given plot.
2. Restrictions on the ratio of a building's floor area to its site area.
3. Vehicular and pedestrian easements, and sub-surface utility and subway easements.
4. Parking and loading requirements.
5. Controls over signs and advertising displays.

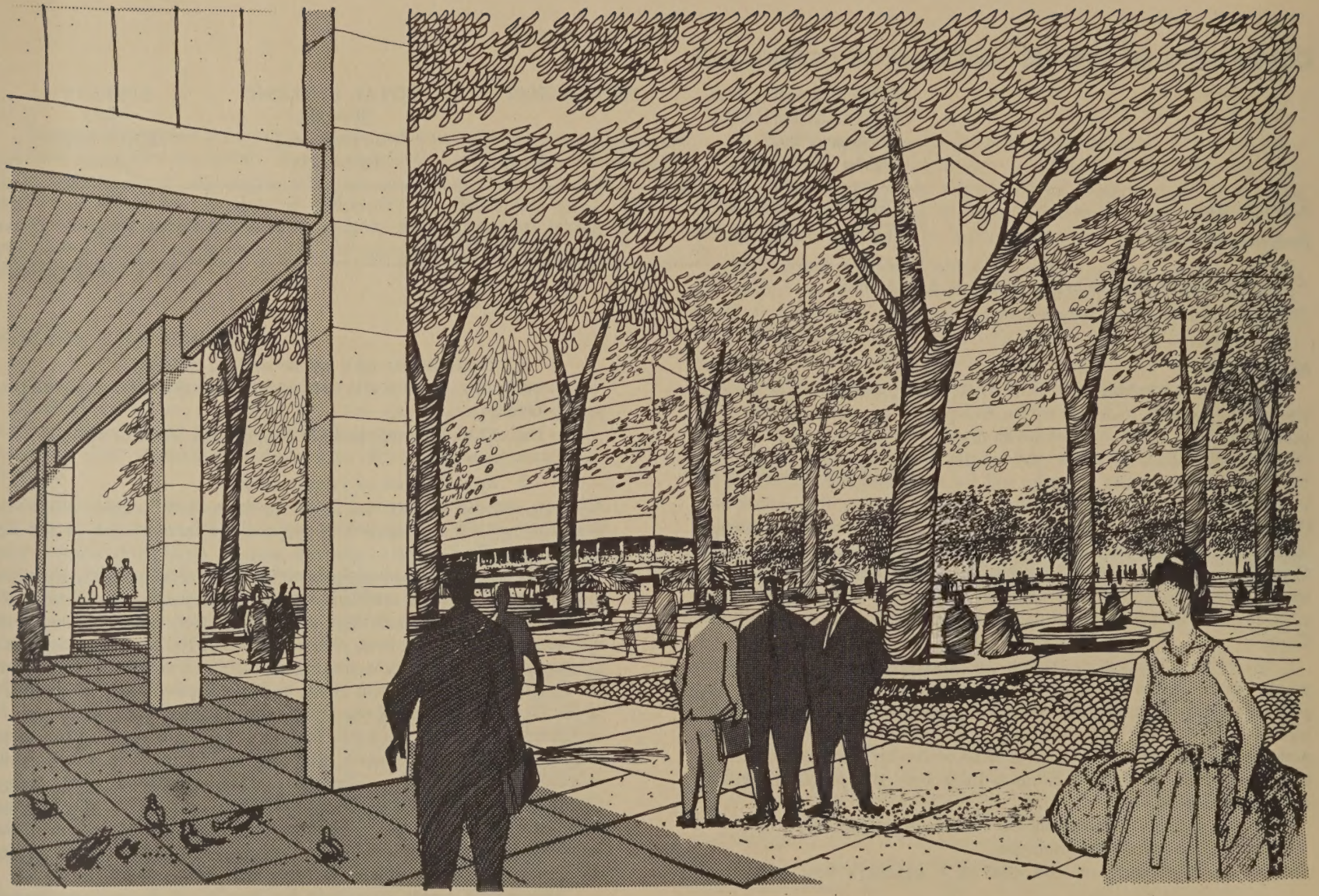
In particular parts of the project area, additional controls are proposed, including:

1. Maximum, and sometimes minimum, limits of building envelope.
2. Special review of exterior design.

All these controls are detailed in an appendix to this report, which sets forth the controls and regulations proposed for incorporation in the Redevelopment Plan.

At the present time municipal control over private property is limited to the type which can be established under the police power, such as building code and zoning regulations, supplemented by some building lines and other forms of easement obtained through the exercise of eminent domain powers. However, in the case of the Government Center project, the Redevelopment Authority, acting under the provisions of Chapter 121 of the General Laws, of Massachusetts may establish such other controls as it deems desirable in the public interest in order to assure that the entire project area will be developed according to the basic design standards adopted by the Authority. These controls and regulations would be included in agreements, leases, deeds, and other instruments whereby land or interest in real property in the project area are disposed of by the Authority to developers, and such standards and controls shall be incorporated—where appropriate—in convenants running with the land.

The present zoning regulations for the City of Boston were drafted thirty-five years ago. At that time there was no General Plan of future development on which zoning districts could be based, and the zoning map which was prepared was largely a reflection of existing land uses.



the square from Hanover Street

Following several years of study by the Planning Board, a new Zoning Code has been proposed, based upon the General Plan of 1950. This proposal, published in May 1958, is now before the newly-appointed Zoning Commission.

The present zoning statute, as it applies to the Government Center area, is so unrestrictive as to provide no sound basis for redevelopment standards and controls. The controls recommended for adoption by the Redevelopment Authority have therefore been based on the proposed Zoning Code, and would be in harmony with it should it be adopted. Present zoning regulations, however, can be expected to remain in force until at least the end of 1960.

In addition to the controls proposed for incorporation in the Redevelopment Plan, a set of special historic district controls have been recommended, as outlined above. They would probably cover restrictions on signs, plus limitations on height and bulk, surfacing material, and scale of fenestration in any new construction. They would apply only within the conservation area and would be administered by a specially appointed commission, within the meaning of the presently-proposed House Bill 2185.

Carrying Out the Plan

Carrying out a project of the magnitude of the Government Center requires the close collaboration of a number of public and private agencies, and it is largely on the effectiveness of this collaboration that its success will depend. Some of these agencies have been involved in the development of the studies leading to the specific planning proposals contained in this report; others will become involved as the plans become translated into action.

The City Planning Board has been associated with the project for the past several years, during which time it has undertaken the preparation of a number of studies and reports in which various ideas for the development of a new Government Center were explored. The Planning Board would continue to have an active role throughout the period of effectuation, even though the major responsibility for carrying out the project would be in the hands of other city and state agencies.

The Redevelopment Authority would be the agency charged with responsibility for acquiring the land within the project area, guiding the relocation of displaced firms and families, demolishing the structures which are to be replaced with new public or private buildings, and selling or leasing the various parcels on which the new construction is to be located. The remaining properties, devoted to public streets or open space, would be assigned to the City of Boston for construction and maintenance. It would be the Authority which would negotiate with prospective purchasers, transfer the titles of the newly-subdivided plots to their respective owners, see to it that the development was carried out according to the program requirements—both as to design and timing—and enforce whatever controls and regulations were embodied in the contracts for sale or lease.

Since there are many critical design decisions yet to be made during the execution of this project, as well as much design review, it is strongly recommended that the Authority take steps to obtain continuing design advice. This might be done by the appointment of a Consultant Architect, or of an Advisory Board of Design.

Previous pages of this report have stressed the need for a relocation study which would make a positive plan for the best disposition of relocated businesses and people. The importance of careful staging of both clearance and new construction, to avoid disturbing effects on the market for commercial space, must also be noted.

An historical agency, perhaps an arm of the federal government, will be needed to acquire and improve a small portion of the historic area, as outlined above.

The proposed improvements in the major highway system within the project area would be carried out by the State Department of Public Works, acting through its Highway Division. Collaborative action with the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority would be necessary in working out the proposals relating to the approaches to the Sumner Tunnel. The Boston Public Works Department and Traffic Commission must be consulted in the design and construction of the local street system.

The Metropolitan Transit Authority has an important part to play in the development of the Government Center area. Plans for a new tunnel between Park Street and Scollay Square stations have been in the design stage for some years, and the only adjustments in the Authority's program that will be necessary to meet the requirements of the proposed scheme relate to the design and location of subway platforms and entrance kiosks. Other agencies which would be involved in the effectuation of the Government Center Project include the General Services Administration of the federal government (for the construction of the federal office building), the Government Center Commission (for the construction of the city hall), the City's Departments of Public Works, Parks, and Markets, and —if the enabling legislation is enacted by the State Legislature—an Historic Districts Commission. Later, when a new county building is scheduled for construction, Suffolk County would also be involved.

GOVDOC
BRA
4577
General
Plan

Figure 7

GENERAL PLAN

GOVERNMENT CENTER — BOSTON — 1959

PREPARED BY ADAMS, HOWARD AND GREELEY, PLANNING CONSULTANTS

LEGEND:

- EXISTING BUILDINGS
- NEW PUBLIC BUILDINGS
- NEW PRIVATE BUILDINGS

100 0 100 200 300 400 500

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Reference Ad176

c.2

Government Center-Boston

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